



# TANZANIA

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)  
Population, Health, and Nutrition Briefing Sheet

## Country Profile

Tanzania, with the fifth largest population in sub-Saharan Africa, is among the poorest countries in the world. Decades of central control have left the nation with an inadequate and crumbling infrastructure and an over staffed and poorly paid civil service. Despite its limited financial resources, however, Tanzania stands at the forefront of multiethnic balance in a region racked with turmoil and instability. It may yet serve as an African model of democratic governance and a market-driven economy.

## USAID Strategy

USAID's family planning and health program in Tanzania is a nationwide initiative conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Health and emphasizes increasing private sector participation and improving conditions in rural areas. USAID support is designed to increase demand for and access to services for family planning, maternal and child health (MCH), and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). USAID addresses sustainability by promoting cost recovery to support clinical services under the Ministry of Health and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

## Major Program Areas

*Family Planning/Maternal and Child Health Services Support.* USAID supports improved reproductive health and child survival through information, education, and communications (IEC) activities; distribution of equipment, contraceptives, and other supplies; and extensive training to improve service quality in the public and private sectors. Contraceptive social marketing efforts are complemented by additional support from the British Department for International Development (DFID). Additional efforts focus on strengthening management; institution building in the Ministry of Health; and integrating services for family planning, child survival, women's health, and HIV/AIDS prevention at the service delivery level.

*HIV/AIDS Prevention and Support.* Working with Tanzania's National AIDS Control Program (NACP), USAID supports the development of networks of NGOs and other private entities undertaking HIV/AIDS activities (particularly those based at the workplace), dissemination of AIDS information, and condom social marketing. NGO activities include training for syndromic diagnosis and treatment of STIs, and support for people impacted by HIV/AIDS, especially orphans. The mission supports capacity building within the NACP and advocates for appropriate national level responses to HIV/AIDS.

## Results

- The use of modern contraceptives by married women in Tanzania doubled from 6 percent in 1991 to 12 percent in 1996, surpassing program expectations.
- There were 735 nurses trained in reproductive health clinical skills in 1996-97. In 1996, 69 percent of health facilities had at least one health provider trained in family planning and reproductive health skills in 1996, up from 24 percent in 1994.
- Availability of contraceptives increased in 90 percent of family planning facilities, with most having at least three methods in 1996, after nearly constant stockouts a few years earlier.
- Exclusive breastfeeding rates for infants younger than six months old tripled to 25 percent in 1996, up from less than 8 percent in 1991-92.
- More than 10 million condoms were sold annually in 1996-97, through an innovative marketing program using various media to promote HIV/AIDS prevention.
- More than 750 clinical officers were trained in syndromic management of STIs in 1996-97.



### Bureau for Africa

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- The NGO sector was recognized as a full partner in strategic planning efforts by the National AIDS Control Program, a direct result of the strong role NGOs have played, with USAID support, in community mobilization nationwide.

## Success Stories

USAID has played a critical leadership role in developing the family planning and health sector in Tanzania. USAID encouragement and coordination with other donors has led to additional support from DFID and German KFW to help meet the increasing demand for contraceptive commodities. Quality assurance guidelines and various integrated training curricula developed with USAID support are now fully used by other donors, NGOs, and government programs nationwide. USAID support for research and surveys produces a wide range of data that are used for family planning and health sector programming throughout Tanzania, as evidenced by the 1996 Demographic and Health Survey. USAID also serves on the steering committee for Tanzania's National Immunization Days, which have played an integral role in successful efforts to increase coverage against polio.

With USAID assistance, the curriculum and training materials for community-based contraceptive distribution agents were revised and expanded to include integrated reproductive health and child survival messages. To date, more than 2,000 educational flipcharts have been distributed to agents; these flipcharts contain exclusive breastfeeding, immunizations, growth monitoring, and nutrition messages. Other USAID-supported integrated IEC activities include expanding the radio program "Zinduka" (a Kiswahili term meaning "wake up") to include child survival and family planning messages, and developing an IEC "toolkit" for MCH nurses designed to improve counseling for mothers on immunizations, antenatal care, maternal and child nutrition, breastfeeding, family planning, and HIV/AIDS.

## Continuing Challenges

Rapid population growth, high infant and child mortality rates, and the heavy impact of HIV/AIDS on Tanzania's most productive age group continue to have grave social and economic consequences. On the positive side, however, the Government of Tanzania is

undertaking major reforms in the civil service, health, and local government sectors. Tanzania's health sector reform activities aim to change the Ministry of Health's role from implementation to policy and regulation; develop a sectorwide program; and enhance district-level service delivery. USAID support for effective public health policy and improved health systems organization will be particularly important during Tanzania's transition to a new health system.



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